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SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION ON THE NEAR EAST

Mr. Raymond A. Hare and Mr. Michael Wright

November 22, 1949

I Discussion on the Persian Gulf:

(1) There appear to be ten major points of conflict in the Persian Gulf.

(2) The best method of procedure with regard to this matter is on an ad hoc basis rather than through a more comprehensive approach.

(3) It is desirable to maintain equality of treatment as between American and British oil companies. However, the United States, having less political interest in the area, would have no particular position on many questions not involving American interests.

(4) The United Kingdom Government prefers to settle the boundary questions with the Saudi Arabian Government by direct negotiations, and hopes no impression will be given to the SAG that the United States is supporting all of the Saudi claims.

(5) The United Kingdom Government will consider proceeding with those negotiations which involve only those Arab Sheikdoms with UK treaty relations. Resolution of such issues might establish a basis for settlement of more complex boundary problems.

(6) The United Kingdom Government will also consider preventing oil companies from operating in disputed areas by a US-UK call for restraint.

II Discussion on the Establishment of an American Consulate in Kuwait:

(1) Though the needs of the United States for a Consulate at Kuwait are recognized, the United Kingdom feels it would be impossible to avoid appointment of consular representatives from other countries if US consular officers were appointed.

(2) The United Kingdom Government will consider further the possibility of an exequatur being issued which would be signed by both the United Kingdom and by the Sheikh.

III Discussion on Ethiopia:

(1) The United Kingdom Government was concerned over the decline of political and economic conditions in Ethiopia.

(2) Having been unable to obtain arms from either the United Kingdom or the United States, Ethiopia had purchased a small arms plant from Czechoslavakia. There was concern over the possibility of Communist infiltration via military assistance. The United States, though apprehensive regarding the situation, is unable to do anything about it unless means can be found for giving greater assistance than has hitherto been the case. It is possible that MAP legislation could be amended to restore the provision for arms procurement on a cash reimbursable basis, though no predictions can be made in this regard at the present time.

(3) The maintenance of order along the borders between Ethiopia and Eritrea and between Ethiopia and Italian Somaliland was one of the most serious problems confronting British administration of that area. More serious disorders are feared when the Italians return to Italian Somaliland.

IV Discussion of King Ibn Saud's Apprehensions Regarding the Hashemites:

(1) The United States has noted in King Ibn Saud's most recent expressions of concern an emphasis slightly different from former appeals. This time the King has referred to the fact that he is surrounded by the Hashemites as well as by the Persian Gulf Sheikhdoms with whom the United Kingdom has special treaty relations and to whom he attributes hostile intentions. He also appears to believe the United Kingdom is not exercising a restraining hand.

(2) The United Kingdom has received similar expressions of apprehension. Several years ago the United Kingdom offered to negotiate a treaty with Saudi Arabia similar to those it has with Jordan and Iraq. The UK would probably not be inclined to offer such a treaty at this time, but hopes that the sending of military missions will be a steadying influence.

(3) The United Kingdom would have no objection if the United States wishes to inform King Ibn Saud that it is exercising a restraining influence on Jordan and Iraq.

SCHEDULE OF DISCUSSIONS

November 14	Introductory Palestine Settlement Long-Range Development Economic Survey Mission Report
November 15	Italian Colonies Economic Survey Mission Report Arab Unity
November 17	Haifa Refinery Long-Term Economic Development (Based on papers submitted by Foreign Office Representative)
November 22	Persian Gulf American Consulate in Kuwait Ethiopia Saudi Arabia